

THE REMINISCENCES OF CARL SCHURZ

position. We could hardly hope to hold out long against such a superiority of numbers, and there was imminent danger that, if we held out too long, the enemy would succeed in turning our right flank and in getting possession of the town of Gettysburg, through which our retreat to the defensive position on Cemetery Hill would probably have to be effected. For this reason I was so anxious to have one of the reserve brigades posted at the entrance of the town to oppose the flanking movement of the enemy which I saw going on.

But, before that brigade came, the enemy advanced to the attack along the whole line with great impetuosity. Gilsa's little brigade, in its exposed position "in the air" on Barlow's extreme right, had to suffer the first violent onset of the Confederates, and was fairly crushed by the enemy rushing on from the front and both flanks. Colonel Gilsa, one of the bravest of men and an uncommonly skillful officer, might well complain of his fate. Here, as at Chancellorsville, he was in a position in which neither he nor his men could do themselves justice, and he felt keenly the adverse whims of the fortunes of war. General Barlow, according to his habit always in the thickest of the fight, was seriously wounded, as happened to him repeatedly, and had to leave the command of the division to the commander of its second brigade, General Adelbert Ames. This brigade bravely endured an enfilading fire from

two rebel batteries placed near the Harrisburg road. But it was forced back when its right flank was entirely uncovered and heavy masses of rebel infantry pressed upon it.

About four o'clock, the attack by the enemy along the whole line became general and still more vehement. Regiment stood against regiment in the open fields^ near enough almost to see the white in one another's eyes, fking literally in one another's faces. The slaughter on both sides was awful. At